

ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.: 2003P01776WOUS

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:

Please add new drawing Figures 1-3.

REMARKS

Claims 11- 27 are pending. This Amendment amends claims 11-13 and 15-20, and adds new claims 21 – 27 and Figures 1-3. Claims 11 and 26 are independent.

The Claimed Invention

Conventional dishwashers are operated using rotary switches or buttons. These control devices include moving parts which are liable to wear and may be impaired by contamination. Conventional dishwashers are also known to include displays that visibly reproduce dishwasher operation information. These dishwashers typically require a plurality of displays and may also rely upon different lamps to reproduce different colors. Further, these displays and controls are separate from each other.

A first exemplary embodiment, as defined by, for example, independent claim 11, is directed to a dishwasher that includes a container for retaining items to be subjected to a dishwashing operation, and a controller for one of controlling an operating function effecting a switching on of the dishwasher, controlling an operating function effecting a switching off of the dishwasher, and selecting operational functions of the dishwasher, and the controller including a touch-sensitive surface with switching functions allocated to an operating function. The switching function of the touch-sensitive surface is actuatable by relatively light touching contact and the relevant operating function is thereby respectively switched off, switched on, or selected.

A second exemplary embodiment, as defined by, for example, independent claim 26 is directed to a dishwasher that includes a controller that controls the operation of the dishwasher, and a touch-sensitive user interface in communication with the controller that is responsive to a change in an electromagnetic field.

In contrast to the conventional dishwasher, an exemplary embodiment of the claimed invention includes a controller with a touch-sensitive surface that is actuatable by relatively light touching contact (claim 11); and a touch-sensitive user interface in communication with the controller that is responsive to a change in an electromagnetic

field (claim 26). In this manner, the present invention improves ease of operation and is relatively unaffected by wear and contamination.

The Oyler et al. reference

The Office Action rejects claims 11 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being unpatentable over the Oyler et al. reference. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

None of the applied references teaches or suggests the features of the claimed invention including a controller with a touch-sensitive surface that is actuatable by relatively light touching contact. As explained above, this feature is important for improving ease of operation and reducing wear and contamination.

Rather, the Oyler et al. reference discloses a control panel 66 that includes an electronic membrane switch assembly. As pointed out by the Oyler et al. reference such membrane switches are well known. Membrane switches require the use of a substrate that flexes under pressure in order to contact another underlying substrate. In other words, a user of a membrane switch must exert pressure on the touch surface in order to cause the substrate to flex and actuate.

In stark contrast, an exemplary embodiment of the present invention is actuatable merely by relatively light touching contact. In other words, no pressure needs to be exerted at all by the user.

Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection.

The Oyler et al. reference in view of the Brueggemann et al. reference

The Office Action rejects claims 12-14 and 17-20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over the Oyler et al. reference in view of the Brueggemann et al. reference. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

None of the applied references teaches or suggests the features of the claimed invention including a controller with a touch-sensitive surface that is actuatable by

relatively light touching contact as recited by independent claim 11. This feature is important for improving ease of operation and reducing wear and contamination.

As explained above, the Oyler et al. reference clearly does not teach or suggest this feature.

The Brueggemann et al. reference does not remedy the deficiencies of the Oyler et al. reference.

Rather, the Brueggemann et al. reference discloses using “pressure-sensitive sensors 4, i.e. piezosensors 4” (col. 2, lines 64-65). Piezosensors require the application of pressure in order to actuate, thus, the term “pressure-sensitive.”

In stark contrast, an exemplary embodiment of the present invention is actuatable merely by relatively light touching contact. In other words, no pressure needs to be exerted at all by the user.

Additionally, none of the applied references teaches or suggests the features of the claimed invention, as recited by, for example, dependent claim 12 including a touch-sensitive surface of a controller that reacts to a change in an electromagnetic field.

Indeed, the Office Action does not allege that any of the applied references teaches or suggests this feature.

The Oyler et al. reference in view of the Brueggemann et al. reference and in further view of the Neugass reference

The Office Action rejects claim 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over the Oyler et al. reference in view of the Brueggemann et al. reference and in further view of the Neugass reference. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

None of the applied references teaches or suggests the features of the claimed invention including a controller with a touch-sensitive surface that is actuatable by relatively light touching contact as recited by independent claim 11. This feature is important for improving ease of operation and reducing wear and contamination.

As explained above, the Oyler et al. reference and the Brueggemann et al. reference does not teach or suggest this feature.

The Neugass reference does not remedy the deficiencies of the Oyler et al. reference and the Brueggemann et al. reference.

Indeed, the Office Action does not allege that the Neugass reference teaches or suggests this feature.

Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection.

The Oyler et al. reference in view of the Anderson et al. reference and in further view of the Neugass reference

The Office Action rejects claim 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over the Oyler et al. reference in view of the Anderson et al. reference and in further view of the Neugass reference. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

None of the applied references teaches or suggests the features of the claimed invention including a controller with a touch-sensitive surface that is actuatable by relatively light touching contact as recited by independent claim 11. This feature is important for improving ease of operation and reducing wear and contamination.

As explained above, the Oyler et al. reference and the Neugass reference does not teach or suggest this feature.

The Anderson et al. reference does not remedy the deficiencies of the Oyler et al. reference and the Neugass reference.

Indeed, the Office Action does not allege that the Anderson et al. reference remedies these deficiencies.

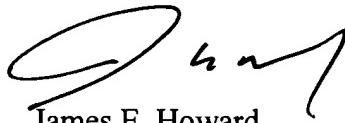
Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection.

CONCLUSION AND FORMALITIES

The Office Action objects to the drawings. In particular, the Office Action requests drawings that illustrate the claimed features. This Amendment adds new Figures 1-3 in accordance with Examiner Waldbaum's very helpful suggestions.

In view of the above, entry of the present Amendment and allowance of claims 11-27 are respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions regarding this amendment, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned. If an extension of time for this paper is required, petition for extension is herewith made.

Respectfully submitted,



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